OTF/FEO Interaction ... on line

To be copied and shared with all members

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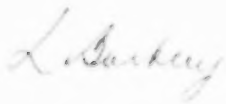
I am pleased to report that, at its October meeting, the OTF Executive received the framework of a strategic plan for OTF for the next five to eight years. The process started with a two-day meeting of elected people and staff of OTF and the Affiliates in late September. The meeting determined some strategic goals. Over the next month, a more comprehensive strategy and plan will be developed. Nested within this ambitious strategy, is a short-term plan for the next 6-12 months. The short-term plan is entirely consistent with the long-term strategy and goals. As the approval process is completed, you will be hearing more of the details of the strategy. The Executive referred the strategic plan to the Affiliates for study and report to the next Executive meeting.

OTF is also looking forward to the first Education Day at the Canadian Aboriginal Festival at the SkyDome in Toronto on November 20, 1998. Organizers are hoping for thousands of children to attend. The *Toronto Star* has prepared a teaching kit for the day. The kit was prepared by a teacher, and the staff at OTF and ETFO have assisted in editing.

I know that collective bargaining issues continue to present problems for teachers in our schools. Many collective agreements have been signed, but many more remain outstanding. These are very difficult times for teachers with so much change happening all at once. As the President of OTF, I am aware of the stresses in the schools, and I am doing all that I can to support you. If you want to contact me by email, I have a new address, otfprez@enoreo.on.ca. I will do my best to reply to you as quickly as possible.

Yours truly,



Liz Barkley

Mandela and the Children

At the Mandela and the Children event at the SkyDome in Toronto in September, the OTF President and representatives of the Affiliates had an opportunity to meet President Nelson Mandela and his wife. From left to

right in the photograph are: Earl Manners, OSSTF President; Nelson Mandela, President of South Africa, Gracia Machel, President Mandela's wife, Liz Barkley, OTF President, Phyllis Benedict, ETFO President and Marilies Rettig, Past President of OECTA.

News from the Executive

Strategic Plan
The Executive referred the strategic framework to the Affiliates for study and report to the November meeting. However, the Executive approved some planning around the strategy to continue in the mean time. A special Board of Governors' meeting has been called for November 23, 1998 to present the details of the plan to the Governors.

OTF/Affiliate Curriculum Forum
The Executive received a report that the OTF Curriculum Forum will be meeting on November 15 at the Orbitor Drive Offices of ETFO. They will be focussing on the new curriculum for Grades 1-8 and Grades 9-12. The issue of implementation of these new curricula documents will also be on the agenda.

The Curriculum Forum is made up of representatives of subject/special interest groups. They meet once or twice a year under the auspices of OTF to deal with curriculum issues.

School Councils
The President, Liz Barkley, reported to the Executive on presentations made to the Education Improvement Commission about the future of school councils. There have been two meetings on this issue. In the second meeting, three items were discussed-teachers involvement on school councils; contact with provincial organizations; and the advisory role of school councils.

President Barkley outlined the position OTF took with the EIC with regard to teachers who are parents serving on school councils. At the request of the EIC Co-chairs, a joint letter from the OTF and Affiliate Presidents was forwarded on October 15, 1998.

Assistance to Cuba

The Director of International Relations for the Cuban Ministry of Education, Carlos Alfaro, visited Toronto recently and spent some time meeting with OTF President Liz Barkley asking for assistance from the teachers of Ontario. The OTF Executive approved a motion to encourage the Affiliates to publicize the campaign of the Canadian Committee for Educational Support to Cuban Children to collect donations and educational materials for Cuban children.

The Committee can be contacted at 60 Southport St., Unit 407, Toronto, Ontario M6S 3N4.

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